

THE
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OMEN.

THE sun burns down the westward way ; afar
The shadows eastward wane, while to a swoon
Of silence falls the day's symphonic tune ;
And riding lightly by a cloudland bar,
Where heavenly shoals of drifted roses are,
I watch the lovers' lustre-laden moon,
And thrill to see the sure love-light that soon
Doth flash in gold from its attendant star.

The drowsy flowers nod, save those blanched blooms
That lure the night-moth through the dusky deeps ;
The song-hushed birds flit through the glooms ;
And, nested in the dark, the day-world sleeps :
I, too, would sleep—but for the bat that flies
Athwart the umbrous amber of my skies.

CHARLES STUART PRATT.

NOTRE DAME DES EAUX

WEST of St. Pol de Leon on the sea cliffs of Finisterre
stands the ancient church of Notre Dame des Eaux.
Five centuries of beating winds and sweeping rains
have moulded its angles, and worn its mouldings and sculpt-
ure down to the very semblance of the ragged cliffs them-
selves, until even the Breton fisherman, looking lovingly
from his boat as he makes for the harbour of Morlaix, hard-
ly can say where the crags end and where the church begins.
The teeth of the winds of the sea have devoured it, bit by
bit, the fine sculpture of the doorway and the thin cusps of
the window tracery ; gray moss creeps lovingly over the worn

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walls in ineffectual protection; gentle vines, turned crabbed by the harsh beating of the fierce winds, clutch the crumbling buttresses, climb up over the sinking roof, reach in even at the louvres of the belfry, holding the little sanctuary safe in desperate arms against the savage warfare of the sea and sky.

Many a time you may follow the rocky highway from St. Pol even around the last land of France, and so to Brest, yet never see sign of Notre Dame des Eaux, for it clings to a cliff somewhat lower than the road, and between grows a stunted thicket of harsh and ragged trees, their skeleton white branches, tortured and contorted, thrusting sorrowfully out of the hard, dark foliage that still grows below, where the rise of land where the road winds give some protection. You must leave the wood by the two cottages or yellow stone, about twenty miles beyond St. Pol, and go down to the right around the old stone quarry, then, bearing to the left by the little cliff path you will, in a moment, see the pointed roof of the tower of Notre Dame, and, later, come down to the side porch among the crosses of the arid little grave yard.

It is worth the walk, for though the church has outwardly little but its sad picturesqueness to repay the artist, within it is a dream and a delight. A Norman nave of round, red stone piers and arches, a delicate choir of the richest flamboyant, a high Altar of the time of Francis I, form only the mellow background and frame for carven tombs and dark old pictures, hanging lamps of iron and brass, and black, heavily carved choir stalls of the Renaissance.

So has the little church lain unnoticed for many centuries, for the horrors and follies of the Revolution have never come near, and the hardy and faithful people of Finisterre have feared God and loved our Lady too well to harm her church. For many years it was the church of the Comtes de Jarleuc,

and these are their tombs that mellow year by year under the warm light of the painted windows, given long ago by Comte Robert de Jarleuc when the heir of Poullaouen came safely to shore in the harbour of Morlaix, having escaped from the Isle of Wight, where he had lain captive after the awful defeat of the fleet of Charles of Volois at Sluys. And now the heir of Poullaouen lies in a carven tomb, forgetful of the world where he fought so nobly; the dynasty he fought to establish, only a memory; the family he made glorious, a name; the château Poullaouen a single crag of riven masonry in the fields of M. du Bois, mayor of Morlaix.

It was Julien, Comte de Bergerac, who rediscovered Notre Dame des Eaux, and by his picture of its dreamy interior in the Salon of '86, brought once more into notice this forgotten corner of the world. The next year a party of painters settled themselves near by, roughing it as best they could, and in the year following, Mme. de Bergerac and her daughter Heloise came with Julien, and, buying the old farm of Pontivy on the highway over Notre Dame, turned it into a summer house that almost made amends for their lost château on the Dordogne, stolen from them as virulent Royalists by the triumphant Republic in 1794.

Little by little a summer colony of painters gathered around Pontivy, and it was not till the spring of 1890 that the peace of the colony was broken. It was a sorrowful tragedy. Jean d'Yriex, the youngest and merriest devil of all the jolly crew, became suddenly moody and morose. At first this was attributed to his undisguised admiration of Mlle. Heloise, and was looked on as one of the vagaries of boyish passion, but one day when, riding with M. de Bergerac, he suddenly seized the bridle of Julien's horse, wrenched it from his hand, and, turning his own horses towards the cliff, lashed the terrified animals into a gallop,

straight towards the brink, only being thwarted in his mad object by Julien, who, with a quick blow sent him headlong in the dry grass, and reined in the terrified animals hardly a yard from the cliffs. When this happened, and no word of explanation was granted, only a sullen silence that lasted for days, it became clear that poor Jean's brain was wrong in some way. Heloise devoted herself to him with infinite patience, though she felt no special affection for him, only pity, and while he was with her he seemed sane and quiet. But at night some strange mania took possession of him. If he worked on his Prix de Rome picture in the day time, while Heloise sat by him, reading aloud or singing a little, no matter how good the work, it would have vanished in the morning, and he would again begin, only to erase his labour during the night.

At last his growing insanity reached its climax, and one day in Notre Dame, when he had painted better than usual, he suddenly stopped, seized a palette knife, and slashed the great canvas in strips. Heloise sprang forward to stop him, and in crazy fury he turned on her, striking at her throat with the palette knife; the thin steel snapped, and the white throat only showed a scarlet scratch. Heloise, without that ordinary terror that would crush most women, grasped the thin wrists of the madman, and though he could easily have wrenched his hands away, d'Yriex sank on his knees in a passion of tears. He shut himself up in his room at Pontivy, refusing to see any one, walking for hours up and down, fighting against growing madness. Soon Dr. Charpentier came from Paris, summoned by Mme. de Bergerac, and after one short, forced interview, left at once for Paris, taking M. d'Yriex with him.

A few days later came a letter for Mme. du Bergerac, in which Dr. Charpentier confessed that Jean had disappeared, that he had allowed him too much liberty, owing to

his apparent calmness, and that when the train stopped at Le Mans he had slipped from him and utterly vanished.

During the summer word came occasionally that no trace had been found of the unhappy man, and at last the Pontivy colony realized that the merry boy was dead. Had he lived he *must* have been found, for the exertions of the police were perfect, yet not the slightest trace was discovered, and his lamentable death was acknowledged, not only by Mme. de Bergerac and Jean's family,—sorrowing for the death of their first-born, away in the warm hills of Lozere,—but by Dr. Charpentier as well.

So the summer passed, and the autumn came, and at last the cold rains of November, the skirmish line of the advancing army of winter, drove the colony back to Paris.

It was the last day at Pontivy, and Mlle. Heloise had come down to Notre Dame for a last look at the beautiful shrine, a last prayer for the repose of the tortured soul of poor Jean d'Yriex. The rains had ceased for a time, and a warm stillness lay over the cliffs and on the creeping sea, swaying and lapping around the ragged shore. Heloise knelt very long before the Altar of our Lady of the Waters, and when she finally rose, could not bring herself to leave as yet that place of sorrowful beauty, all warm and golden with the last light of the declining sun. She watched the old verger, Pierre Polou, stumping softly around the darkening building, and spoke to him once, asking the hour. But he was very deaf, as well as nearly blind, and he did not answer.

So she sat in the corner of the aisle by the Altar of Our Lady of the Waters, watching the chequered light fade in the advancing shadows, dreaming sad day dreams of the dead summer, until the day dreams merged in night dreams, and she fell asleep.

Then the last light of the early sunset died in the gleam-

ing quarries of the west window; Pierre Polou stumbled uncertainly through the dusty shadow, locked the sagging doors of the mouldering south porch, and took his way among the leaning crosses up to the highway and his little cottage, a good mile away, the nearest house to the lonely Church of Notre Dame des Eaux.

With the setting of the sun great clouds rose swiftly from the sea; the wind freshened, and the gaunt branches of the weather-worn trees in the church yard lashed themselves beseechingly before the coming storm. The tide turned, and the waters at the foot of the rocks swept unceasingly up the narrow beach and caught at the weary cliffs, their sobbing growing and deepening to a threatening, solemn roar. Whirls of dead leaves rose in the church yard and threw themselves against the blank windows. The winter and the night came down together.

Heloise awoke, bewildered and wondering; in a moment she realized the situation, and without fear or uneasiness. There was nothing to dread in Notre Dame by night; the ghosts, if there were ghosts, would not trouble her, and the doors were securely locked. It was foolish of her to fall asleep, and her mother would be most uneasy at Pontivy, if she realized before dawn that Heloise had not returned. On the other hand, she was in the habit of wandering off to walk after dinner, often not coming home till late, so it was quite possible she might return before Madame knew of her absence, for Polou came always to unlock the church for the low mass at six o'clock; so she arose from her position in the aisle, and walked slowly to the choir rail, entered the chancel, and felt her way to one of the stalls, on the south side, where there were cushions and an easy back.

It was really very beautiful in Notre Dame by night; she had never suspected how strange and solemn the little church could be when the moon shone fitfully through the south

windows, now bright and clear, now blotted out by sweeping clouds. The nave was barred with long shadows of the heavy pillars, and when the moon came out she could see far down almost to the west end. How still it was! Only a soft low murmur without of the restless limbs of the trees and of the creeping sea.

It was very soothing, almost like a song, and Heloise felt sleep coming back to her, as the clouds shut out the moon and all the church grew black.

She was drifting off into the last delicious moment of vanishing consciousness, when she suddenly came fully awake with a shock that made every nerve tingle. In the midst of the far faint sounds of the tempestuous night she heard a footstep! Yet the church was utterly empty, she was sure. And again! A footstep, dragging and uncertain, stealthy and cautious, but an unmistakable step, away in the blackest shadow at the end of the church.

She sat up, frozen with the fear that comes at night, and that is overwhelming, her hands clutching the coarse carving of the arms of the stall, staring down into the dark.

Again the footsteps, and again; slow, measured, one after another at intervals of perhaps half a minute, growing a little louder each time, a little nearer.

Would the darkness never be broken? Would the cloud never pass? Minute after minute went like weary hours, and still the moon was hid, still the dead branches rattled clatteringly on the high windows. Unconsciously she moved as under a magician's spell, down to the choir rail, straining her eyes to pierce the thick night. And the step: it was very near. Ah! the moon at last! A white ray fell through the westernmost window, painting a bar of light on the floor of sagging stone. Then a second bar, then a third, and a fourth, and for a moment Heloise could have cried out with relief for nothing broke the lines of light, no figure, no

shadow. In another moment came a step and from the shadow of the last column appeared in the pallid moonlight, the figure of a man. The girl stared breathless, the moonlight falling on her as she stood rigid against the low parapet. Another step, and another, and she saw before her,—was it ghost or living man?—a white, mad face staring from matted hair and beard, a tall thin figure half clothed in rags, limping as it stepped towards her with wounded feet. From the dead face stared mad eyes that gleamed like the eyes of a cat, fixed on hers with insane persistence, holding her, fascinating her as a cat fascinates a bird.

One more step, it was close before her now! those awful, luminous eyes dilating and contracting in awful palpitation. And the moon was going out, the shadows swept one by one over the widows, she stared at the moonlit face for a last fascinated glance. Mother of God! it was—the shadow swept over them, and now only remained the blazing eyes and the dim outline of a form that crouched waveringly before her as a cat crouches, drawing its vibrating body together for the spring that blots out the life of the victim.

In another instant the mad thing would leap, but just as the quiver swept over the crouching body, Heloise gathered all her strength into one action of desperate terror.

“Jean, stop!”

The thing crouched before her, paused, chattering softly to itself, then it articulated dryly and with all the trouble of a learning child the one word *Chantez!*

Without a thought Heloise sang; it was the thing that she remembered, and old Provençal song that d'Yriex had always loved. While she sang the poor, mad creature lay huddled at her feet, separated from her only by the choir parapet, its dilating, contracting eyes never moving for an instant. As the song died away, came again that awful tremour indicative of the coming death spring, and again

she sang; this time the old *Pange lingua*, its sonorous Latin sounding in the deserted church like the voice of dead centuries.

And so she sang; on and on, hour after hour, hymns and chansons, folk songs and bits from comic operas, songs of the boulevards alternating with the *Tantum ego*, and the *O Filii et Filiae*. It mattered little what she sang. At last it seemed to her that it mattered little whether she sang or no, for her brain whirled round and round like a dizzy mæstrom, her icy hands gripping the hard rail alone supported her dying body. She could hear no sound of her song, her body was numb, her mouth parched, her lips cracked and bleeding; she felt the drops of blood fall from her chin. And still she sang, with the yellow palpitating eyes holding her as in a vice. If only she could continue until dawn! It must be dawn so soon! the windows were growing gray, the rain lashed outside; she could distinguish the features of the horror before her, but the night of death was growing with the coming day, blackness swept down upon her, she could sing no more, her tortured lips made one last effort to form the words "Mother of God, save me!" and night and death came down like a crushing wave.

But her prayer was heard; the dawn had come and Polou unlocked the door for Father Augustin, just in time to hear the last, agonized cry. The maniac turned in the very act of leaping on his victim, and sprang for the two men, who stopped in dumb amazement. Poor old Pierre Polou went down at a blow, but Fr. Augustin was young and fearless and he grappled the mad animal with all his strength and will. It would have gone ill with even him, for no one can stand against the bestial fury of a man in whom reason is dead, had not some sudden impulse seized the maniac who pitched the priest aside with a single movement, and, leaping through the door, vanished forever.

Did he hurl himself from the cliffs in the cold, wet morning, or was he doomed to wander, a wild beast, until he beat himself in vain against the walls of some asylum, an unknown, pauper lunatic? None ever knew.

The colony at Pont Ivy was blotted out by the dreary tragedy, and Notre Dame des Eaux sank once more into silence and solitude. Once a year Fr. Augustin said Mass for the repose of the soul of Jean d' Yriex, but no other memory remained of the horror that blighted the lives of an innocent girl, and of a gray-haired mother, mourning for her dead boy in far Lozere.

RALPH ADAMS CRAM.

REBUKE

I



BUILT my house before the hill
Where his rose who had done me ill.

'T was dear to scan him, night and day,
Bent low along his icy way,

Between the tall black trees that stood
Stark, like his own ingratitude.

'T was dear to mark how fortune mocked
The child her lulling hand had rocked;

To see him totter, old and gray,
Who was defiant yesterday.

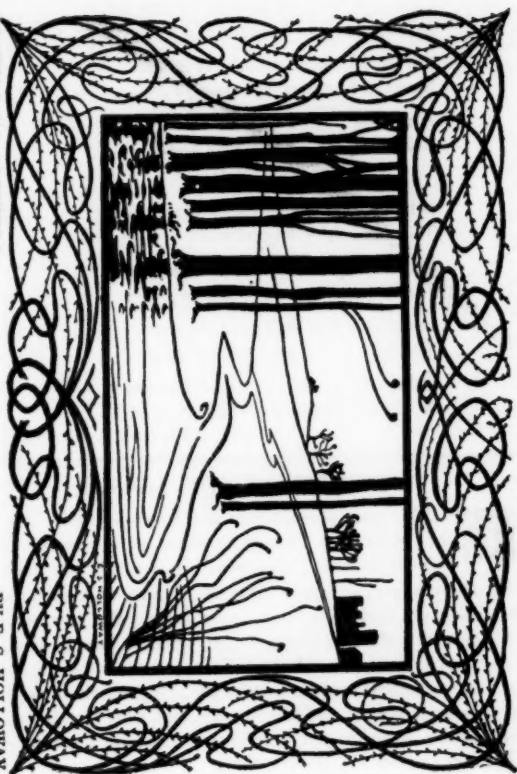
For hate had given into my hand
Revenge. I loved his sterile land.

II

Then, ere I guessed it, in the night
A verdure dulled the deeps of white;

DRAWING FOR "REBUKE."

BY E. S. HOLLOWAY



Grew, till the way he walked was hid
 Behind a sylvan pyramid :
 For April loosed a flight of leaves
 Between him and my spying eaves,
 And I—I bowed like a beaten god
 Below Olympia's mightier nod.

III

O hands that have a touch more thin
 Than any fairy fingers win !
 O little leaves that blow and be
 For one year's day green company !
 Is there in you that coax the sun
 To light voluptuous woman's fun
 A heart that yearns to a broken heart,
 A blood that beats for friends apart ?

HARRISON S. MORRIS.

THE POET OF THE LEAVES

IF Celtic poetry is likely at last to come to its own, thanks to such younger writers as the author of "The Countess Kathleen," it is surely impossible that Davyth, too, delightful Davyth, should, after all these centuries, not find his modern opportunity. For now, when it is clear that the true lovers of poetry make a race by themselves, superior to the old racial lines and the old confusion of tongues, whose language, in fact, is polyglot, whose music as various as Homer and Merlin, it is high time that Davyth of Gwilym should be acclaimed for what he is ; a prince of that race, a prince in his own right.

In making this princely claim for him, I know that not everyone, even of that eclectic race, may care for him and

his mediæval forest songs. There are those who find even Petrarch frigid, even Spencer too mellifluous or too long; and there will be some who, in any case, under the most engaging auspices, will not quite like Davyth. Moreover, in transferring his exquisite rhythms, his airy irrepressible spirit of wit and all various fancy, to another tongue, it is sad to think how much must inevitably be lost. The difficulty is great, and I for one quite recognize it in attempting now to act as his interpreter.

Davyth, whom I have called the Poet of the Leaves, because he has sung their praise as no one else, before or since, in any tongue, was one of the fortunate poets in his life, about which we know enough, but not too much, as well as in his lyric opportunity, which came so early in the centuries. He lived before the art of biography was practiced, as now, not wisely but too well. There is thus a sufficient veil, like the veil of green leaves, that he is fond of describing in his poems, over the insignificant parts of his history; and this gives just that honourable mystery, that agreeable glamour, which ought to enshroud all poets' lives. So the ideal Davyth, let us trust, in spite of occasional rumours of newly discovered records and the like, will remain undisturbed in his leafy circumstance to the end of the chapter. It is one of the convincing things in his favour, indeed, that as with Shakespeare, the fates hoodwinked the gossips and busy-bodies about his comings and goings. A sign of no common condescension on their part, since they refused it to Keats. The fates are capricious, as we know, and do not always act discreetly or kindly even by their favourites. But they were so far kind to Davyth. We have no love-letters of his save his poems, though he was as irrepressible in his love-affairs as Burns. And as for his sins, if he had any beyond those necessary for salvation, which, that is to say, gave the divine heat to the poet in him, and the humanity to

the man, after five centuries they are all forgotten. *Tempus consessit*, Time is the great palliator!

In the middle ages it was more possible, perhaps, for men to follow their bent, and for poets to be natural than now. Davyth was not only a child of nature—

“The summer sun his sire,

His mother was the lady moon,”

but what used to be very prettily called a “natural child,” and is said to have been born under a hedge, although his parents were of noble family. That the Poet of the Leaves should be cradled thus in the brake, shows at once that rarer sense of fitness, which is the sign of an exceptional history. It is only the great to whom it is given to be lowly born. The date of his birth, without being too precise, fell in the first half of the fourteenth century, about 1340. He was thus an exact contemporary of Chaucer; and it touches one’s sense of propinquity strangely to reflect now, that these two poets, one the morning star of English poetry, and the other the master-singer of Mediæval Wales, whose magic harp once awakened may go on sounding far into time, should have lived so long, islanded in the same country, within a few score leagues of each other, and never heard a note of each other’s music, never indeed so much as heard one another’s names.

Chaucer, before everything a poet of men, was born in London; very appropriately, our Poet of the Leaves was born in a remote hamlet of Cardiganshire, at Bro Gynin, in the parish of Slanbadarn. An old Welsh poem, which has come down to our times, assures us that Taliesin himself foretold the birth there of a poet whose song should be like wine. Who could resist such a prophecy?

There is no song liker fine wine than Davyth’s; but so much of its aroma goes, alas, in putting it into English flagons;

“Twi-coloured sounds, ah, maiden of my love,

Within the swinging branches weave a spell ;
The cuckoo there, so amorous, or sad,
Within them hid, calls to the summer-sun ;
He is my forest clock that chimes and chimes again,
The mystic bird that makes the summer rhyme ;
And there the grey descanting nightingale
Sends forth his voice, to find me 'neath the eaves,
And the fighting blackbird crows as I withdraw,
And the brown thrush, childlike, prattles to himself ;
And so, sweet maiden, I adorn my song,
With many a rhyme, the only gift I have."

The rhyme, unluckily, is gone in my version : since to retain it would be to do more violence than I dare offer to his exquisite effects. Here, however, is an attempt, by no means hyperliteral, to capture some of his music, in another passage of the same song of summer :

"And now in the nimble airy sky
The summer sun again rides high ;
And the white, white light I love is come,
Where in the joy of life I roam.
O summer, with my winter's pain,
And body's hurt made whole again.
Old Earth ! this is the Summer's way !
Where the forest leaves in the sunlight sway ;
'Come hither, come ! to my sanctuaries,'
He called, 'where resting in the breeze,
The birchtree tops, in mimic seas,
Or maiden-hair, in green device,
Make it a poet's paradise !'
Ah ! who, so dear a retreat,
Would fail to seek with eager feet
Where midsummer is so sweet ?"

But before we venture further into the leafy labyrinth of his poetry, let us recall something more of his life whose

mediæval colour and spirit is so naturally and so finely reflected in his poems. One word, too, I should like to say about his forbears, if only to point out that he was remotely descended from the same stock which in the eleventh century produced Howell the Tall, poet and prince, writer of most exquisite love-songs, and Howell's brother, Madoc; that Madoc whom some people still claim was the discoverer of America:

"Madoc of the sailor's fame."

Davyth's father was Gwylym Gam; his mother Arduoyl; she was beautiful, I am sure; certainly she was of noble blood, but I spare you her pedigree. Though her people were noble by blood, they did not treat her nobly. They turned her out of doors, when she most needed pity, a few months before Davyth was born. Her lover married her afterwards; but his people, too, disapproved of the match, and their child was, in a worldly sense, hardly circumstanced in his first beginnings. In fact, all his boyhood was passed in an uncertain state of vagabondage; carried as he was, from pillar to post, now in the great house of some princely uncle, now lodged in some out-of-the-way cottage with only the greenwood, or the mountain-side, to serve as his guide and comforter,—

"Where, free of toll, like a god of the caves,
No cold could hurt me all the summer day."

On the whole, a fine, stirring, healthy and natural boy's life, full of charm, full of colour, full of adventure. A better prentice-ship for a poet than our suburban standards are likely to afford. He lived well in touch with all that brisk pageantry of the open air, which makes for a natural life; and in those days, it was easier to expand one's pulses, than in ours; easier to be a man first, and a poet afterwards.

Davyth must have become fairly saturated in his youth with the essence of an open air, and with all that incom-

municable forest lore which peeps out of his poetry at every turn. However, I am not one of those who believe that he was only, or even mainly, a poet of nature. He was so good a poet of nature because he was so good a love-poet. Morvyth, it was, and certain other and earlier mistresses of his heart and soul, who brought him the talisman at last, by which all his forestry became as lyrical as the songs of his favorite bird—"speckle-breast," as the Welsh have it—the song thrush.

Yes! it was Morvyth who made him, from a casual gallant into a true lover, and from a true lover into a perfect poet.

In the forest they nearly always kept their stolen tryst; and so the leaves were more than leaves to him. They became part of Morvyth's appanage; they took on a more human colouring as she passed, and she gained an added sylvan grace and charm from them. The birchtree was her friend; the holly her sentinel; the blossoms of the broom gave her of their gold, to add to the gold of her own hair, whose praises Davyth sings with such delight in its beauty. He, too, had the same hair, which he wore flowing in long ringlets over his shoulders, in his earliest period; and he sings the praise of his own beauty, and his own fitness as a creature of the forest, with just as much naïveté, as he does Morvyth's.

Indeed, there is no more taking portrait in all the picture gallery of the poets, than Davyth's rhymed miniature of himself,—a slender, graceful figure; with flowing yellow locks and eyes bright as a blackbird's, lying in wait for Morvyth among the golden blossoms of the broom, and weaving for himself as he waits a hat of birch-bark and birch-leaves.

In the prime of youth and the prime of the year, Davyth was wed to Morvyth in the forest by an irregular bardic

ritual that held in Wales then, and that he, at least, thought sufficient. But her friends married her against her will afterwards to a rich hunchback, whom Davyth always called "Bwa Bach," the little crookback. Thereafter, the lovers had to meet in secret, in the forest;—always in the forest. And often Davyth waited for her in vain; and encountered cold winds and colder despairs. Sometimes he reproached her bitterly. He pictured himself dead, slain by her neglect, in one of his most hauntings poems, full of his finest imagery. With this imaginary death and forest funeral, I cannot do better than conclude these brief memorials of our Poet of the Leaves, whose history in truth, well garnished with his haunting rhymes, to be truly told, would need a quarto's grace at least. This last passage, I should say, is not merely my translation; but is altered from that in the little volume by Johnes, published in 1803, and lately lent me by Professor Palgrave:

"To-morrow I must in my grave be laid,
Amid the leaves and floating forest shade.
In yon ash-grove, whose neighbouring birchen trees
Shall serve as mourners at my obsequies:
My spotless shroud shall be of summer flowers,
My coffin hewn from out the branching bowers;
And fern and trefoil too shall be my pall,
My bier eight forest branches, green and tall;
And e'en the very woodlands shall be seen
To start and join the sad funereal scene.
There holy church built of the rocks shall be,
Where watch as keepers of the sanctuary,
Two nightingales,—enchantress, chosen by thee!"

ERNEST RHYS.

SCENES IN THE VOSHTI HILLS

V.

BY THE PLACE CALLED PERADVENTURE.

BY that Place called Peradventure in the Voshti Hills dwelt Golgothar the strong man, who, it was said, could break an iron pot with a blow, or pull a tall sapling from the ground.

"If I had a hundred men so strong," said Golgothar, "I would go and conquer Nooni the city of our foes."

Because he had not the hundred men he did not go, and Nooni still sent insults to the country of Golgothar, and none could travel safe between the capitals. And Golgothar was sorry.

"If I had a hundred men so strong," said Golgothar, "I would build a dyke to keep the floods back from the people crowded on the lowlands."

Because he had not the hundred men, now and again the floods came down, and swept the poor folk out to sea, or laid low their habitations. And Golgothar pitied them.

"If I had a hundred men so strong," said Golgothar, "I would clear the wild bear from the forests, that the children should not fear to play among the trees."

Because he had not the hundred men the graves of children multiplied, and countless mothers sat by empty beds and mourned. And Golgothar put his head between his knees in trouble for them.

"If I had a hundred men so strong," said Golgothar, "I would with great stones mend the broken pier, and the bridge between the island should not fall."

Because he had not the hundred men at last the bridge gave way, and a legion of the King's army were carried to the whirlpool, where they fought in vain. And Golgothar

made a feast of remembrance to them, and tears dripped on his beard when he said, "Hail and Farewell!"

"If I had a hundred men so strong," said Golgothar, "I would go against the walls of chains our rebels built, and break them one by one."

Because he had not the hundred men the chain walls blocked the only pass between the hills, and so cut in two the kingdom: and they who pined for corn, went wanting, and they who wished for fish went hungry. And Golgothar, brooding, said his heart bled for his country.

"If I had a hundred men so strong," said Golgothar, "I would go among the thousand brigands of Mirnan, and bring again the beloved daughter of our city."

Because he had not the hundred men the beloved lady languished in her prison, for the brigands asked as ransom the city of Talgone which they hated. And Golgothar carried in his breast a stone image she had given him, and for very grief let no man speak her name before him.

"If I had a hundred men so strong—" said Golgothar, one day, standing on a great point of land and looking down the valley.

And as he said it, he heard a laugh, and looking down he saw Sapphire, or Laugh of the Hills, as she was called. A long staff of ironwood was in her hands, with which she jumped the dykes and streams and rocky fissures; in her breast were yellow roses, and there was a tuft of pretty feathers in her hair. She reached up and touched him on the breast with her staff, then she laughed again, and sang a snatch of song in mockery:

"I am a king,
I have no crown,
I have no throne to sit in—"

"Pull me up, boy," she said. She wound a leg about

the staff, and taking hold, he drew her up as if she had been a feather.

"If I had a hundred mouths I would kiss you for that," she said, still mocking, "but having only one I'll give it to the cat, and weep for Golgothar."

"Silly jade," he said, and turned towards his tent.

Suddenly as they passed a slippery and dangerous place, where was one strong solitary tree, she threw a noose over him, drew it fast and sprang far out over the precipice into the air. Even as she did so, he jumped behind the tree, and clasped it, else on the slippery place he would have gone over with her. The rope came taught, and presently he drew her up again to safety, and while she laughed at him and mocked him, he held her tight under his arm, and carried her to his lodge, where he let her go.

"Why did you do it, devil's madcap? he said.

"Why didn't you wait for the hundred men so strong?" she laughed. "Why did you jump behind the tree?"

"If I had a hundred men, higho,

I would buy my corn for a penny a gill.

If I had a hundred men or so,

I would dig a grave for the maid of the hill, higho!"

He did not answer her, but stirred the soup in the pot and tasted it, and hung a great piece of meat over the fire. Then he sat down, and only once did he show anger as she mocked him, and that was when she thrust her hand into his breast, took out the little stone image, and said:

"If a little stone god had a hundred hearts,

Would a little stone goddess trust in one?"

Then she made as if she would throw it into the fire, but he caught her hand and crushed it, so that she cried out for pain and anger, and said: "Brute of iron, go break the posts in the brigand's prison-house, but leave a poor girl's bone alone. If I had a hundred men—" she added, mocking wildly

again, and then, springing at him, put her two thumbs at the corners of his eyes, and cried: "Stir a hand, and out they will come—your eyes—for my bones!"

And he did not stir till her fury was gone. Then he made her sit down and eat with him, and afterwards she said softly to him, and without a laugh: "Why should the people say, 'Golgothar is our shame, for he has great strength and yet he does nothing, but throw great stones for sport into the sea'?"

He had the simple mind of a child, and he listened to her patiently, and at last got up and began preparing for a journey, cleaning all his weapons, and gathering them together. She understood him, and she said, with a little laugh like music: "One strong man is better than a hundred—a little key will open a great door easier than a hundred hammers. What is the strength of a hundred bullocks without this?" she added, tapping him on the forehead.

Then they sat down and talked together quietly for a long time, and at sunset she saw him start away upon great errands. And before two years had gone, Noon, the city, was taken, the chain wall of the rebels opened to the fish and corn of the poor, the children wandered in the forest without fear of wild boars, the dyke was built to save the people in the lowlands, and Golgothar carried to the castle the King had given him, the daughter of the city, freed from Mirnan. "If Golgothar had a hundred wives—" said a voice to the strong man as he entered the castle gates.

Looking up he saw Sapphire. He stretched out his hand to her in joy and friendship.

"—I would not be one of them," she added with a mocking laugh, as she dropped from the wall, leaped the moat by the help of her staff, and danced away laughing. Yet there are those who say that tears fell down her cheeks as she laughed.

GILBERT PARKER.

NOTES

¶The letter which I print below may seem vague, although all will be beguiled by it. I take it to refer to a tempest among our literary brethren across the border. I remember that lately one Canadian poet in a fretful mood accused another of being the arch-plagiarist of modern times. Ah! when poets disagree—, but to the letter.

To the editor of the CHAP-BOOK,

Dear Sir:

A question has been agitating my mind lately. And that is, why do we only write epitaphs on people who have departed this life? We often lose our friends long before death takes them to himself. Human nature, (alas, that I should know it!) is not always equal to the strain of a life-long attachment. And when we must sadly lose our former companions, through some untoward misunderstanding, or through envy, hatred, malice or some uncharitableness, why not commemorate them in fitting elegies? When you come to think about it, it is much sadder to lose a friend so, than by the natural disposition of Providence, as it is called. When a man dies, his faults are forgotten. Only the beauties of the character survive. He has passed forever beyond the possibility of disappointing us more. We cherish him in perpetual and jealous memory, a princely being, worthy of our utmost loyalty. And so, likely enough, he must have been, if he could stand our petty temper and our small demands of selfishness so many years. But the friend who withdraws himself from the circle of your life before his time—Shall you have no tears for him?

I have lately been suffering from an acute attack of literary egomania. That is to say, the attack was on myself; but the egomania was on my late lamented friend. So small a thing as a magazine article in which, naturally enough, he

with his modesty came in for a smaller share of eulogy than a shameless and rampant egotist like myself, seems to have stirred his gall; and I have been "spat upon and cursed" in the choicest journalese.

I wish I knew how to be reconciled with him; but I don't. I fear his ire is too hot to be cooled by words. There is really nothing left for me to do, but to write his *Hic jacet*, and let him depart into the limbo of false loves and broken idols. As I cast about for a final word to write above the empty niche this man occupied in my effections, a jesting demon is at my elbow. The first thing that occurs to me is that familiar quatrain from Mother Goose's Melodies:

"Here lies little Willie deep down in the dumps;
He perished one day in a fit of the grumps.
He sulked, and refused to come in to his tea,
Because his big brother was bigger than he."

And then my roving demon wanders back to a little village in Maine, where he once read this pious Epitaph on a lumberman killed in his perilous employment:

"Here lies my Willie's last remains.
He was a tender lamb.
It was the rolling of the logs
That crushed him in the jam."

And yet that is not quite appropriate. It is too flippant and lacks any note of serious regret. Were it not for the unwarranted and fulsome assumption of superiority on my own part, I should be tempted to make use of Congreve's lines:

"O Willie, little Willie,
Is it envy, is it guile,
When you criticise your brother,
Makes you dip your pen in bile?
"But Willie, little Willie,
Do you think it worth your while,
To break your pretty baby teeth

Against your brother's file?"

And even that does not quite please me; and I shall be driven to my own resources after all:

"Farewell, lamented W!

Wherever you may be,

May no one ever trouble you

More than you trouble me."

I think that is neat and of a proper Christian spirit. My only regret is, that my tribute should be so brief. However, time is long, if art is impatient, and I promise myself the opportunity of returning to the memory of my departed friend in future. When the first pangs of grief for such a loss have subsided, I doubt not I shall be able to commemorate this gentle soul in a worthy and more extensive elegy.

I am, dear sir, very faithfully yours,



¶ I don't see but that people want just as much as if they deserved it.

¶ I see announced in *The Critic* an American edition of "In the Year of Jubilee," by "Guy Boothby." It was my impression that Mr. George Gissing was the author of the book. He has been so masquerading in England. Is *The Critic* written in a naive ignorance of literary affairs, or is it such a partisan of Mr. Boothby as to wish to deck him out in borrowed plumage?

¶ I wish I were in a position of such authority as would allow me to use new words with impunity. A moment ago I was sorely tempted to say that the *Critic* was apparently "bizzled." This excellent word has been long in domestic use with some friends of mine. It expresses a general condition of being mentally confused, "tangled," or in any

way askew; but nothing conveys the idea of being "bizzled" quite so well as "bizzled" itself. It is a crying shame that a meritorious and charming word should exist only as an unknown fragment of domestic patois.

¶ If I cannot repay a kindness, let me entertain it with my best behavior.

¶ Occasionally one sees lamentable examples of the extreme folly of attempts on the part of newspaper critics to think. The persons who "conduct literary columns" in the daily press are not often guilty of such rashness. They usually follow an admirable rule, "think twice before you speak once," and so supply their required amount of copy with magical ease. All that is needed is a careful indiscrimination as to the merits of any given work and a few general ideas as to literary tendencies.

It is these general tendencies in literature which work the ruin of the newspaper critics.

I am moved to this remark by sundry journalistic judgments on Tolstoy's "Master and Man." The story itself is wonderfully simple and human, telling of how the rich man of a Russian village and his servant died together in the snow, and how at the last all the harsh memories of the past were lost in a revelation of the universal brotherhood of man.

But Mr. Howell's introduction has played the mischief. It is not merely for the simple story we must read, he says, but for "the drama of the race playing itself in a corner as it has played itself through all history on the stage of the world."

Tolstoy's fiction apparently means something beside the story. He is perhaps not quite sure of the changeless beauty of the social order. In short there lurks an idea somewhere. My critics are aghast, and go a-tilting at degeneration and socialism, with beautiful deductions from their theory of general tendencies.

For example, one, who has heard it alleged that we are at present accomplishing a reaction in favor of the blood and thunder school of fiction, where Weyman and Doyle do make "the vorpal blade go snicker snack," and who is feverish from the idea, infers that fiction which means anything is "written with a purpose," tiresome and damnable. Another newspaper gentleman, vehemently regenerate and skittish as his confrère at sight of an idea infers that fiction which means anything is insidiously if not hideously immoral.

It may possibly appear to these gentlemen an ideal state of affairs that the thought of the suffering one should not lead to the thought of the suffering many. But it is at least impossible. An intense human sympathy such as Tolstoy's cannot be kept within bounds. The harsh relations of Master and Man are transmuted in any mind to those of Masters and Men. It is the alchemy of simple art and truth.

What is ordinarily called "purpose fiction" I do not care much for, mainly because it is all purpose, and little fiction. But in this "Tolstoy" affair there seems no great crime in inducing thought. As to the hideous purpose, implications as to the value and beauty of the Golden Rule will probably appear periodically in our best literature for years to come. I trust they will never cause my gorge to rise.

¶ A while ago in Tennessee there was a discussion about style which would have delighted Mr. Andrew Lang. He would have proof that the great American people is weaving the very woof of its national life to the accompaniment of dissertations on the niceties of expression in the language.

It appears that there was a convention at Memphis to settle all questions as to the currency. Whether it was for gold, silver, or anything else in particular, I do not know, as I am anything but political. At any rate the convention

rioted in discussion for some days and at last proceeded to draw up resolutions.

The first signs of the approaching outbreak was a question whether "bimetalism" were not after all preferable to "bimettalism." The radical element hurled defiance at dictionaries, but was finally calmed, and the word was inscribed with but one "t." A lull followed almost the end.

Then came a part of the resolution where something, I do n't know just what or who, was to be allowed to "slumber and sleep." The phrase seems to me both inelegant and fitting. But one delegate, pluming himself upon his taste, asserted that there were two words where one would suffice. The euphonious flow of the phrase had, however, pleased the opposition and the storm burst. Two words were always better than one. The language at least might safely be inflated.

The fury of the "slumberites" might have burned itself out had not a gentleman lately from England alleged that the phrase was pleonasm. At this the assembly was one in its indignation. Pleonasm, indeed—a likely thing in a meeting of patriotic American citizens. The scholarly gentleman's voice was stilled, and the resolutions were engrossed "slumber and sleep."

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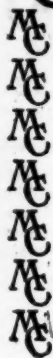
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